

# Telluride Film Festival

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THE TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 35<sup>th</sup> GUEST DIRECTOR:  
SLAVOJ ZIZEK

Berkeley, CA (March 31, 2008) - The Directors of the Telluride Film Festival are thrilled to announce that Slavoj Zizek will preside as the Guest Director of the Festival's 35<sup>th</sup> Show, August 29- September 1, 2008. The Slovenian-born irrepressible political philosopher, cultural theorist, academic superstar and impassioned cinephile is certain to stimulate controversy and conversation with his hand-picked film treasures and exhilarating approach to talking about movies, art, culture, politics, and desire.

Zizek is the author of more than fifty books covering a diverse array of subjects ranging from Hitchcock to Wagner, religion to cyberspace, Lenin to the Iraq War, David Lynch to *The Sound of Music*. In an article on Zizek in *The New Yorker*, Rebecca Mead writes, "Zizek's aim, in his work, is to combine a Marxist critique of capitalism with a psychoanalytically informed unmasking of the ways in which capitalism works upon the public imagination."

Zizek has taught at universities from Paris to Ann Arbor, including Duke, Columbia, Princeton, Georgetown, and the New School for Social Research in New York. He currently holds a post at the Department of Philosophy, University of Ljubljana and is Co-Director of the International Centre for Humanities at Birkbeck College, University of London, and maintains a tireless global lecturing schedule.

Zizek has lectured at London's National Film Theatre, and presented seasons of films at the Harvard Film Archive and The Museum of Modern Art in New York. After seeing him in New York, J. Hoberman of the *Village Voice* wrote, "Zizek is a sensational performer and he can also be quite funny." In 2001, The British Film Institute published his book on Krzysztof Kieslowski *The Fright of Real Tears*.

The charismatic lecturer is the subject of several documentaries including *Zizek!* (2005) and *Slavoj Zizek: The Reality of the Virtual* (2004). Most recently, Zizek collaborated with filmmaker Sophie Fiennes on *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema* (2006), a film that offers a striking visual introduction to Zizek's ideas on subjectivity, sexuality, and the

relationship between fantasy and reality. Fiennes observes that Zizek is “always inverting things and setting up unexpected relationships. It's kind of like a mind gym.”

“What I love about Slavoj's way of looking at film,” Fiennes says, “is that he shows how important form is. Intuitively, when you watch films, you are enjoying that idiosyncratic language. And his explicit way of reading great moments is exhilarating for me.” In the film, Zizek guides viewers into a close examination of some of the most lauded and fascinating films in cinema history.

Each year Festival Program Directors Tom Luddy and Gary Meyer ask a passionate film lover to join them in programming a selection of films the Guest Director will introduce. Past Guest Directors have included Bertrand Tavernier, Salman Rushdie, John Simon, Philip Lopate, Laurie Anderson, Guillermo Cabrera-Infante, Errol Morris, Donald Richie, B. Ruby Rich, Edgardo Cozarinsky, Alberto Barbera, John Boorman, Jean-Pierre Gorin, Edith Kramer, Peter Bogdanovich, Don DeLillo, Peter Sellars, Buck Henry, Peter Von Bagh and Stephen Sondheim.

The Telluride Film Festival celebrates its 35<sup>th</sup> year in the small Colorado mountain town of Telluride. The program includes a carefully chosen selection of films showing for the first time in North America with numerous rediscoveries of classic films, three career tributes and numerous special programs. Other than announcing the Guest Director, the program remains a secret until opening day of the Festival.

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Cited:

Rebecca Mead. “The Marx Brother.” *The New Yorker*. May 5, 2003.

Sophie Fiennes. quoted in Cathleen Rountree. “Sophie Fiennes and The Pervert's Guide to Cinema.” <http://www.greencine.com/central/sophiefiennes>. May 3, 2007.

Sophie Fiennes. quoted in *Time Out New York*, April 19-25, 2007.